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## A SLIP COVER FOR A DAVENPORT

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If the family budget won't stretch to include new furniture this spring, or even reupholstering the old pieces, perhaps you can give the living-room a fresh look by making removable slip covers for the overstuffed chairs and davenport. The Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, has made a study of various useful kinds of furniture covers, and says that while making slip covers is by no means a simple task, an amateur can produce attractive results if careful thought is given to the choice of material, the placing of design repeats, good fitting, and strong, firm seams.

Slip covers used to be considered merely as protective coverings when the season rolled around for putting away the best rugs and the heavy hangings. No thought was given to their decorative possibilities. Now we use slip covers all year, if the material selected combines both warm and cool colors. They should be as trimly fitted as professionally upholstered furniture, well tailored, and made of interesting materials in attractive colors. Sometimes they may serve the same purpose as before -- to protect the chair or couch from dust; or they may conceal worn places in the furniture covering underneath, or merely cover up colors that are out of harmony with the rest of the room.

The making of a cover for a davenport is about like making one for a chair except for size and extra cushions. There are one or two points to be taken into special consideration when you measure the piece beforehand to determine how much material to buy. In the first place, large repeating figures have to be centered and balanced or matched on the back and sides of the davenport. Figured cretonnes and other printed material suitable for slip covers often have a definite up and down in the design. This again limits the way the material can be placed and usually necessitates an extra allowance of material which must be carefully measured





on the counter. In the illustration notice that the groups of stripes and flower figures are not only balanced on the back of the davenport but are repeated in the corresponding positions on the cushions. This gives the effect of continuing the design and prevents the confusion that would result from covering the cushions in a hit or miss way.

The second point about covering a davenport or sofa is to decide where it is going to stand. Sometimes the whole back is completed with a piece of cheaper stuff such as unbleached muslin, to save three or four yards of more expensive cover material. But this is not a good plan unless you are sure the davenport will always be set against a wall. It is better to make the slip cover alike all over so that the davenport can be placed in front of the fire sometimes. However, the unbleached muslin might be used for the part under the loose cushions, but the slip cover material must extend far enough so that this substitution does not show.

When you make a slip cover for the first time, or from material with large figures, model a pattern from old sheets or other old cloth before you cut into the new. The cover for the davenport in the picture cuts with least waste from 36-inch cloth. Each of the pieces for the cushions and back sections is cut from one width of material, which leaves a strip wide enough for the boxing around the sides and backs of the cushions. The back sections correspond with the three cushions and are joined by cording of the same fabric.

For the ruffle, calculate the number of strips by measuring around the davenport at the place where it will join the body of the cover and divide by the width of the material. Allow three times this number for pleating and twice as many for a gathered flounce. Cut the ruffle so that the lengthwise threads of the cloth run up and down, the same as in the slip cover.

The kind of seams depends largely upon the material and the finished appearance desired, but in any case the construction must be durable enough to withstand the strain put upon it. French seams are preferable to plain ones, because the double stitching increases strength and covers the raw edges. Often seams are stitched on the right side, trimmed to one-fourth inch, and covered with a binding. Or cording that contrasts with the slip cover material or matches it may be used as a seam finish.

Loose cushions should be covered separately, and the covering should be the same style as that of the cushion. For example, covers for boxed cushions must also be boxed and never made merely by sewing two pieces of cloth together. Since covers are taken off frequently one seam should be left open. It may be sewed by hand after the cushion is inserted, or it may be finished as a placket and closed with snaps, hooks and eyes, buttons, or a sliding fastener.

